

Appl. No. 10/643,559
Amdt. Dated Jul. 15, 2005
Reply to Office Action of Apr. 15, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A supporting column for supporting substrates, comprising:

a main body having a C-shaped cross section and defining an axial bore along an axis direction, and

a stiff shaft being received in the axial bore,

wherein the main body ~~comprise~~ comprises a half-sleeve shaft and a plurality of parallel wing panels encircling portions of the half-sleeve shaft, and each wing panel includes a protrusion in a middle of the wing panel.

Claim 2 (original): The supporting column as described in claim 1, wherein the wing panels are spaced apart from one another a predetermined distance and are formed perpendicular to the half-sleeve shaft.

Claim 3 (original): The supporting column as described in claim 1, wherein a shape of the wing panels is round, approximately round, or tongue-shaped.

Claim 4 (original): The supporting column as described in claim 1, wherein a size of the protrusion gradually decreases from the half-sleeve shaft to the edge of the wing panels.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The supporting column as described in claim 1, wherein ~~the supporting surface of~~ the protrusion of each wing panel is shaped [[like]] as a conicity or a hill.

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Claim 6 (original): The supporting column as described in claim 1, wherein the stiff shaft is made of metal.

Claim 7 (original): The supporting column as described in claim 1, wherein the stiff shaft defines threaded holes in opposite ends thereof.

Claim 8 (withdrawn) A cassette for accommodating a plurality of substrates in mutual isolation, comprising:

a pair of frames having a plurality of threaded holes in the opposite edges of the frames, and

at least two pair of supporting columns fixed to the frames, each supporting column comprising:

a main body having a C-shaped cross section and defining an axial bore along an axial direction, and

a stiff shaft being received in the axial bore,

wherein the main body comprises a half-sleeve shaft and a plurality of parallel wing panels encircling portions of the half-sleeve shaft, and each wing panel provides a protrusion in the middle of the wing panel.

Claim 9 (withdrawn) The cassette as described in claim 8, further comprising a pair of stopper members for fixing each of the supporting columns to the frames.

Claim 10 (withdrawn) The cassette as described in claim 8, wherein the wing panels are spaced apart from one another a predetermined distance and are formed perpendicular to the half-sleeve shaft.

Claim 11 (withdrawn) The cassette as described in claim 8, wherein a shape of the wing panels is round, approximately round, or tongue-shaped.

Claim 12 (withdrawn) The cassette as described in claim 8, wherein a size of the protrusion gradually decreases from the half-sleeve shaft to the edge of the wing panels.

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Claim 13 (withdrawn) The cassette as described in claim 8, wherein the stiff shaft is made of metal.

Claim 14 (withdrawn) The cassette as described in claim 8, wherein the stiff shaft defines threaded holes in opposite ends.

Claim 15 (canceled)

Claim 16 (new): The supporting column as described in claim 1, wherein the half-sleeve shaft of the main body has holding portions, the holding portions extend along a circumference of the stiff shaft beyond half circumference.

Claim 17 (new): The supporting column as described in claim 16, wherein the holding portions space apart each other in the axis direction.

Claim 18 (new): A supporting column for supporting substrates, comprising:

a main body having a C-shaped cross section and defining an axial bore along an axis direction, and

a stiff shaft being received in the axial bore,
wherein the main body comprises a half-sleeve shaft and a plurality of parallel wing panels encircling portions of the half-sleeve shaft, and each wing panel includes a strip-like protrusion extending upon an upper face thereof along a direction from a root portion of each wing panel to an outer edge thereof in a tapered and thinned manner.